



**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Western District of Washington**

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**MARINE CONSERVATION FUND AWARDS \$1.7
MILLION IN GRANTS TO RESTORE PUGET SOUND
Funding Comes from Settlement with Shipping Line
That Used "Magic Pipe" to Illegally Dump Oil**

Fourteen projects to restore Puget Sound, Hood Canal and associated marine waters will take a big step forward this summer with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Puget Sound Marine Conservation Fund. The Fund was established last year as part of the settlement of a criminal case with Evergreen International Shipping Line.

John McKay, United States Attorney for the Western District of Washington, was joined by Jay Manning, the Director of the Washington State Department of Ecology to announce the successful grant recipients today.

"These grants will help in ways large and small to improve the health of Puget Sound," said United States Attorney John McKay. "It is appropriate that as part of the punishment imposed criminal defendants in cases such as this contribute to restoring, preserving and protecting the community's waterways."

The successful projects to be funded were chosen from 121 pre-proposals and 28 full proposals submitted to a screening committee comprised of representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Washington State Department of Ecology and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The \$1.7 million in grants will be enhanced with nearly \$1.3 million in matching contributions.

Among the projects being funded are restoration of the salt marsh and intertidal habitats in the Nisqually Delta, Dungeness River Estuary, and the Qwuloolt Estuary in Marysville. One grant will pay for the removal of a creosote lumber bulkhead on Protection Island, a prime seabird and marine mammal breeding area near Port Townsend. Grant money will also pay for the removal of derelict fishing gear from the Northwest Straits. There is also funding for teacher training about marine conservation, expansion of the Whale Sighting Network and Soundwatch Boater Education program. "Because Puget Sound and Hood Canal are so beautiful, a lot of people think they are healthy, but we have growing evidence that they are in trouble from pollution and loss of critical fish and wildlife habitat. These projects will help to reverse the loss of critical habitat on our shorelines and in our estuaries," said Ecology Director Jay Manning.

In April 2005, Evergreen International S.A. pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles to 24 felony counts brought in Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles, California; Newark, New Jersey; Portland, Oregon; and Charleston, South Carolina. The charges included making false statements, obstruction of a Coast Guard investigation and failing to maintain an accurate Oil Record Book, thus concealing the deliberate, illegal discharge of waste oil. The company also pleaded guilty to a negligent discharge of waste oil in the Columbia River in March 2001. The charges and guilty plea resulted from a Coast Guard investigation that began in 2001, after inspectors with the Washington State Department of Ecology discovered an Evergreen ship was using a removable bypass or "magic pipe" to dump oil waste into the water. Similar pipes were discovered on at least seven other Evergreen ships.

Following the guilty plea, the company was ordered to pay \$25 million in monetary penalties, of which \$10 million was to be paid as community service. The Puget Sound Marine Conservation Fund was established with Western Washington's share of the \$10 million split among the five districts for environmental community service projects.

A complete listing of the projects being funded through this first round of grants is attached or can be viewed on line after 11:00 AM at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget_sound/marine_conservation_fund.pdf

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